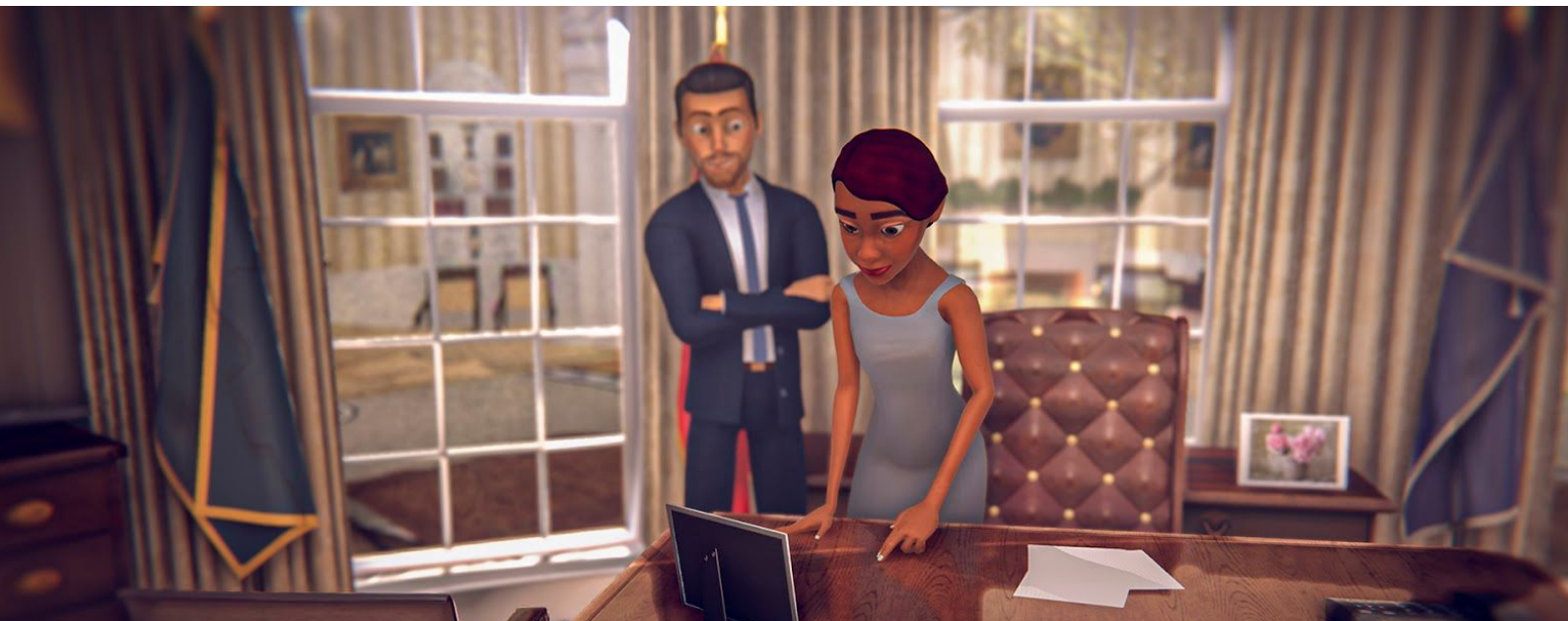




CHOCOLATE

EFFECTIVE PERSUASION



Lesson 1



Effective persuasion

Persuasion techniques are successful due to the way we process information. When making decisions, we tend towards what's most comfortable, which saves us save time, energy, and mental effort.

Often times, this leads us to **respond automatically, without thinking too much about it**. When we do this, we're susceptible to persuasion.

Politicians, advertisers, salesmen, and others use it to sway us in different ways.

This course will go through the 7 fundamental principles of persuasion:

1. **Connection**
We tend to agree with like-minded people.
2. **POWER**
We tend to follow "authority" figures.
3. **CONSISTENCY**
We want to come across as consistent in our thinking.
4. **Consensus**
It's easier to do something if others already are.
5. **Debt**
If someone does us a favor, we want to pay it back, even if we never asked them to do it.
6. **Contrast**
An opinion carries more weight if we compare it to other, worse ideas
7. **Scarcity**
We give greater importance to things that are perceived as scarce.

Lesson 2



Principle 1: Connection

It's easier to say yes to **people we know, who are similar to us, and who are friendly to us** -- people we are "connected" to in some way.

How are "connections" made?

- **Physical attractiveness.** Attractiveness sways us subconsciously.

In Canadian federal elections, attractive candidates received two and a half times more votes than unattractive ones.

In the US, researchers Sigal and Ostrove conducted a study that shows that attractive people get more lenient sentences in court.

- **SIMILARITY.** It's easier to make connections with people who are similar to us: style, personality, education, etc.

In one experiment, a man dressed as a homeless person faked a heart attack on the street in the middle of a business district. The passerby didn't stop to help, but they did later for the same man dressed in a suit.

- **Praise.** When someone flatters us or draws attention to our good qualities, we're more likely to go along with them.
- **Familiarity.** We connect more with the people and things that are familiar to us.
- **Cooperation.** It's easier to connect with someone we share a common goal with.
- **Association.** If we can get the other person to associate us with something they feel connected to, they will feel connected to us by extension.

Brands associate with beloved celebrities and athletes because a message is more persuasive coming from them.

How to use "connection"?

To be more persuasive, act with these concepts in mind and incorporate them into your messaging.

For example, if you have to persuade a customer, take maximum care of your image (attractiveness); emphasize shared hobbies, shared contacts, and similar experiences (similarity); flatter them sincerely yet subtly (praise); make sure you've built a relationship with them (familiarity); build your message around shared goals (cooperation); and ensure that whenever the client is with you, they associate you with positive and pleasant experiences (association).

Lesson 3



Principle 2: Power

From birth, it's engrained in us that we should **obey authority**. From an evolutionary standpoint, our tendency to respect community norms and hierarchies has been crucial for the survival and development of our societies.

American accident investigators observed that flight crews rarely correct even obvious mistakes by their captain, even if they could be dangerous.

We tend to listen to, accept, and even obey someone with "authority." For example, it's hard for us to disobey a police officer's orders, or go against a doctor's instructions, or ignore the recommendations of an expert.

We've added a reference document on your phone (lower right of the screen) with a very interesting experiment on the power of authority. You can consult it at any time.

What grants people power?

- **Titles, medals, diplomas, etc.** (authority through knowledge).
- **Experience** (authority through knowledge).
- **Clothing:** uniforms, chevrons, an expensive suit, etc. (authority through position).
- **Adornments**-- accessories, jewelry, luxury cars, etc. (authority through status).

Lefkowitz, Blake, and Mouton conducted a study that had a man in a t-shirt and jeans cross the street on red (with no traffic coming). The people waiting around him didn't follow. However, when the same man dressed in a suit and tie did the same thing a little bit later, a large number of passersby followed him across.

In another experiment, researchers Doob and Gross measured the time it takes for cars to honk at others not paying attention when a red light turns green. They concluded that drivers waited longer to honk at fancy, new cars than regular ones.

How to use "power"?

Work these authority symbols into your message. For example, a psychologist might let slip that he got his degree from a prestigious university or that he has several diplomas. A company might show its "hardware" while talking about its years of experience, the number of clients it has, or the recognition it's received.

Create a situation that lets you show this authority. For example, a large company might invite a client to their fancy new offices. A businessman may show off his "success" with an expensive suit, a nice watch or leather shoes.

Get your message endorsed by an authority figure. For example, have experts, professionals, athletes, scientists, etc. tell your story or deliver your message.

Principle 3: consistency

People want to **come across as consistent** in their words, beliefs, attitudes, and actions.

When we take a position we have to be consistent with it. Failure to do so affects our public image.

Consistency is also a good way to simplify our decision-making process because it means we don't have to constantly revisit and analyze the actions we previously took under similar circumstances.

A study by psychologists Knox and Inkster showed that horse racing fans, in their minds, immediately gave a horse a better chance of winning after placing a bet on it.

Psychologist Steven Sherman surveyed residents of neighborhoods in Bloomington, Indiana, and asked if they would volunteer to help organize a charity fundraising campaign to fight cancer. Most answered yes, making an unconscious commitment by showing solidarity. A few days later, the same people were asked for donations to fight cancer, and the number of donors was 700% higher than in the neighborhoods where the survey wasn't conducted.

John Cacioppo, Rod Bassett, and John Miller ran another experiment: they asked a group of students if they would attend a seminar at 07:00 in the morning, and only 24% accepted. A second group was asked if they would be willing to attend the seminar, and only after agreeing were they told what time it was and that they could back out. However, after already having said they would go, no one in the second group backed out after they were told the time of the event.

How to use "consistency"?

Use the the other person's past actions, behaviors, opinions, decisions, etc. as leverage for your proposal. For example, "you've always been a caring person; I'm sure you will want to support this cause," "you're a good person, you should help him," "you always work to reduce costs, this proposal lets us do that," "you said you trust me, let me try."

If the commitment is public, in writing, or signed, the power of consistency will be greater.

Ask for a small concession first. Once you've gotten this, it'll be easier for you to ask for larger ones.

Lesson 4



Principle 4: consensus

When we're not sure about a decision, we tend to look at what others are going or have done. If a lot of people are doing something, we assume they're right.

For example, if we see the line out the door at a restaurant, we'll probably assume the food is good. Or if a book is a bestseller with over a million copies sold, we can assume it's a good read.

It'll always be easier for us to choose a supplier that already has thousands of clients. This is especially true if the clients are other companies in your industry (see principle of connection).

Here's a good example of the principle of consensus in use: imagine you see a woman playing the guitar on the street. You decide to give her some money so you grab a dollar out of your wallet. What do you do if, when you go to drop the money in the guitar case, it's full of 5, 10, and 20 dollar bills? Often times, the artists themselves will put large large bills in there so you feel obligated to leave more money ;-).

Consensus can also have dangerous implications. An experiment carried out by Latané and Darley found that 70% of people who were alone in a room reported what they saw when smoke started coming in from under the door. However, when there was a small group of people in the room with them, only 38% reacted. When an accomplice to the experiment infiltrated the group and acted like nothing was wrong, only 10% reacted.

How to use "consensus"?

Work examples of how other people have already done what you're asking into your messaging. For example, if you want to sell a beauty product, tell them that millions of people are already using it. If you want to sell something to a company, give examples of other companies that are already buying from you, if it's their competition, even better. If you want to convince a child of something, show him how other children, their family members, or you yourself are doing it.

Remember: it's easier for us to follow someone's example if they're similar to us.

Principle 5: Debt

When we give someone a gift or do them a favor, we're creating a subtle obligation for them to pay us back. They'll feel **beholden to us** even if they didn't ask for the gift or favor in the first place.

By wanting to get rid of that feeling of owing you something, they may end up returning the favor with a bigger one than you did for them.

From an evolutionary standpoint, this feeling of reciprocity has been essential for the growth and survival of communities.

This is well-known to brands, who use this principle often. For example, if you're looking for some cheese at the supermarket and someone offers you a sample from a certain brand, you'll be more inclined to look for and buy that brand. In some cases, you'll buy it even if you weren't even looking for cheese!

If you're in a cosmetics store and an employee gives you beauty tips and a makeover for free, you're much more likely to buy something or spend more money there.

If a car salesman lets you test drive a car for free for a whole weekend, you're more likely to end up buying that car or another one from the same dealer.

Austrian scientist Irenaus Eibl Eibesfeldt tells us the story of a German soldier who captured a POW during a mission. At one point, the prisoner offered the hungry German a piece of bread. And eventually, the German ended up letting him go.

Psychologist Dennis Regan conducted the following experiment: he put two people who didn't know each other in the same room. One of them was his accomplice, and the other was the subject of the study. During a

break in the “session,” the accomplice offered a drink to some subjects, and didn’t to others. At the end of each session, the accomplice always asked the subject if they wanted to buy a lottery ticket. The subjects who had been offered a drink were significantly more likely to end up buying a lottery ticket. Imagine that!

How to use "debt"?

Before asking for a favor, make sure you’ve helped the other person in some way. Offer help, contacts, friendship, information, etc. It will always be easier for you to persuade them if you’ve done something for them in the past.

Offer samples, demos, free trials, advice, or information before crafting and delivering your message.

Work the feeling of debt into the conversation, but always subtly. For example, "our company has done a lot for your personal development, now we need..."; "this country has given us everything, we have to..."; "your parents have sacrificed a lot for your education, you should..."

Lesson 5



Principle 6: Contrast

The value of something hinges on what you compare it to.

A real estate agent will often show the worst houses first (basements, small, falling apart, etc.). That way, when they show you the nicer ones (bigger, more luminous, newer, etc.), they look much better by comparison.

An appliance salesman will often start by showing you the deluxe model, complete with insurance and a maximum warranty, even if he knows it's not what you're looking for. That way, you'll see the astronomical price of that option, and the option you're really looking for will seem much more reasonable.

A website will always show you three pricing plans. One will be cheap without many features and one will be very expensive. Then, the middle plan, with the right features at a reasonable price, will seem like a good deal.

A sales study by Whitney, Hubin, and Murphy found that customers will almost always pay more for an accessory (tie, cufflinks, etc.) if they buy it after purchasing a suit. This is because after paying so much for the suit, the price of the accessory seems like nothing in comparison.

How to use "contrast"?

Make sure to compare and contrast options when formulating your argument or proposal.

You can make two proposals: one outrageous and one that you want to be approved. By doing this, the proposal you really want will look much more appealing. You can also combine it with the principle of debt: do them the "favor" of giving up on the first proposal, so now they owe you one.

You can make two or three proposals which really emphasize the differences between the one you want and the other two.

Before the “real” proposal, you can make several much more expensive, difficult, or slower ones.

Principle 7: Scarcity

When there is a shortage of something, that thing is perceived to be more valuable. For example, the value we as a society place on diamonds is directly related to their scarcity.

If it's difficult to access a product, we don't have as much time to hesitate when it comes to getting it. We tend to react quickly and try harder to get our hands on the product.

The same thing happens with a lack of information. If details in a news story are **left out**, it only makes us want to know what it is more and we are more likely to react positively to it, even before hearing it.

Brands regularly use the principle of scarcity to encourage impulse buys: only 4 seats left, offer valid while supplies last, for customers only, until January 7, limited series, etc.

One experiment by S.S. Brehm and M. Weintraub used children under 2 years old to show this concept. There were two toys in a room: one that was easily accessible, and another with a transparent fence around it. In some cases, the fence was only about a foot tall, and the child could get over it easily. In other cases, the fence was two feet tall and the children had to go around it to get to the toy. When the fence wasn't an obstacle for them, the children showed no preference towards any particular toy. However, when the fence was, the children always gravitated towards the harder-to-reach toy.

How to use "scarcity"?

If you can, talk about limitations to accessing your product, proposal, or person.

For example, "I'm looking at other job offers" (there's a competition for resources, in this case your labor); "We can't miss this train" (time constraint); "there's only one supplier for this product on the market"; "this house is in an exclusive community with a gate guard"; "I can only guarantee this offer until Friday," etc.